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Georgia's "Quality Rated" Program congratulates first rated programs

Over 1,100 early learning programs have voluntarily enrolled in new rating program

ATLANTA, Ga., (February 5, 2013) – In just over one year, more than 1,100 child care programs have enrolled in Quality Rated, Georgia's new voluntary system to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in early care and education programs. The program is administered by the Quality Initiatives Division of Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL).

Similar to rating systems for other service industries like restaurants and hotels, Quality Rated identifies early care and education programs that meet a set of standards exceeding the state's minimum licensing requirements. Quality Rated launched in January, 2012. Quality Rated uses one, two and three stars to indicate programs that meet defined program standards beyond Georgia's minimum licensing requirements.

In September, 2012, Justus Kidz, a family day care home in Buford, Georgia, became the first child care program in Georgia to be Quality Rated with two-stars. In October, 2012, Explorations Christian Academy, a family day care home in Lawrenceville, became the first program to receive a three-star rating. In December, 2012, Kid's World Learning Center in Statesboro became the first child care center in Georgia to be rated, receiving a two-star rating. In January, 2013, the First Baptist Church of Ellijay Weekday program became the first child care center in Georgia to receive a three-star rating.

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"Programs participating in Quality Rated support the whole child and prepare them for ongoing success in life," said DECAL Commissioner Bobby Cagle. "Now with over 1,140 child care programs voluntarily enrolling in just over a year, we see how Quality Rated is being enthusiastically embraced by early childhood educators all across the state." Cagle said programs choosing to participate in Quality Rated become eligible for free professional development, technical assistance, and financial incentive packages supported by foundations and businesses.

This July, families will be able to verify if a provider is participating in Quality Rated and to see the quality rating they have achieved by visiting the Bright from the Start website at www.dec.al.ga.gov.

Child care programs may learn more about Quality Rated and sign up for a Quality Rated orientation session sponsored by the local child care resource and referral agency at: <https://www.cnp2000.dec.al.ga.gov/QualityRatedTraining/Splash.asp> or visit the Quality Rated webpage at <http://www.qualityrated.dec.al.ga.gov> where eligible programs can begin the application process.

For answers to questions about Quality Rated, call the Quality Rated Help Desk at 1-855-800-7747.

About Bright from the Start

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning is responsible for meeting the child care and early education needs of Georgia's children and their families. It administers the nationally recognized Georgia's Pre-K Program, licenses child care centers and home-based child care, administers Georgia's Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program, federal nutrition programs, and manages voluntary quality enhancement programs.

The department also houses the Head Start State Collaboration Office, distributes federal funding to enhance the quality and availability of child care, and works collaboratively with Georgia child care resource and referral agencies and organizations throughout the state to enhance early care and education. For more information, go to www.dec.al.ga.gov.